

## APPENDIX II

### PUBLIC COORDINATION

JAN 29 1998

Planning Division  
Environmental Branch

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

The Jacksonville District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is seeking information about issues, concerns, resources, and opportunities associated with the ongoing study of the Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel (see enclosed location map). We are requesting public input into this study in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. Information contained in your response will be used to help formulate a plan and to identify resources and impacts to those resources by the project.

In addition to the information contained in this letter about the study, we are also announcing that Mr. Tim Murphy, Project Manager, will give a presentation on the study at the Agency on Bay Management, Natural Resources Committee Meeting. The meeting will be held on February 11, 1998, at 9 a.m. in the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council Office located at 9455 Koger Boulevard, St. Petersburg, Florida. You may respond to this letter with your comments or submit oral or written comments at the meeting.

The study is looking at determining the Federal interest in deepening and widening this navigation channel. The local sponsor for this project is the Tampa Port Authority. A model study has been done to determine the effects of proposed improvements on navigation. This real-time investigation was done to assist in optimizing channel width and turning basin configuration required to efficiently navigate the study area. We will be looking to determine if the size of the channel is adequate for safety of the types of vessels projected to use it. We will also be looking at the viability of the existing turning basin, if the existing turning basin could be expanded (see enclosure 2) or if an additional basin is warranted (see enclosure 3).

Please address your comments to:

US Army Corps of Engineers  
Chief, Planning Division  
P.O. Box 4970  
Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019

-2-

If you have any questions regarding this notice, please contact Mr. Bill Fonferek at 904-232-2803.

Sincerely,

*H/1/26*  
John R. Hall  
Acting Chief, Planning Division

Enclosure

*40/SM/TA*  
Fonferek/CESAJ-PD-ER/2803/ljd  
Dugger/CESAJ-PD-ER  
Kurzbach/CESAJ-PD-E  
Murphy/CESAJ-DP-I  
Strain/CESAJ-PD-P  
Hall/CESAJ-PD

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# Clearinghouse Review

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TAMPA HARBOR - ALAFIA RIVER NAVIGATION CHANNEL, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, IC&R #049-98.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is seeking information about issues, concerns, resources, and opportunities associated with the study of this project. The study is to determine the federal interest in deepening and widening the navigational channel, which is located in central Hillsborough County at the mouth of the Alafia River. The study entails determining if the existing channel is adequately sized to safely accommodate the types of vessels projected to use it. Additionally, the study will examine the viability of the existing turning basin, if it could be expanded, or if an additional turning basin is warranted.

The existing 3.6-mile channel is authorized at 200 feet wide and 30 feet deep, extending from the main shipping channel to the turning basin for the Cargill Fertilizer facility. It was first authorized in the 1890s, and last expanded in about 1950. The proposed channel dimensions are 250 feet wide and 43 feet deep.

The existing turning basin, located inside the mouth of the Alafia River, is 700 feet wide and 1,200 feet long. The northern side is hardened by bulkheads, forming mooring sites. Alternatives have been advanced for increasing turning area: enlargement of the current basin to provide a 1,200-foot turning radius of appropriate depth, or creation of a new turning basin in eastern Hillsborough Bay north of the mouth of the Alafia River.

## Council Comments/Concerns

The information provided in the scoping letter was too brief to determine the proposed extent of either alternative. However, based upon knowledge of the Alafia River and this area of Hillsborough Bay, a number of potentially-adverse environmental impacts are apparent, and warrant thorough investigation.

The Council's Agency on Bay Management received a briefing from Mr. Tim Murphy, project director for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, at its Natural Resources/ Environmental Impact Review Committee meeting on February 12th. It was stated that the proposed Hillsborough Bay location of a new turning basin is inconsistent with the *Future of the Region: A Strategic Regional Policy Plan for the Tampa Bay Region*, the wetland rules of the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County, the Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Tampa Bay. The construction of a new turning basin appears to be inconsistent with policies 4.1.6, 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.5.14, 4.7.1, and 4.7.6. The following questions/concerns were identified:

Local Comments Requested From:

Agency	Request Date
Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County	2/6/98
Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission	2/6/98
Hillsborough County Planning & Growth Management	2/6/98

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Committee's comments constitute compliance with Florida's Intergovernmental Coordination and Review process only.

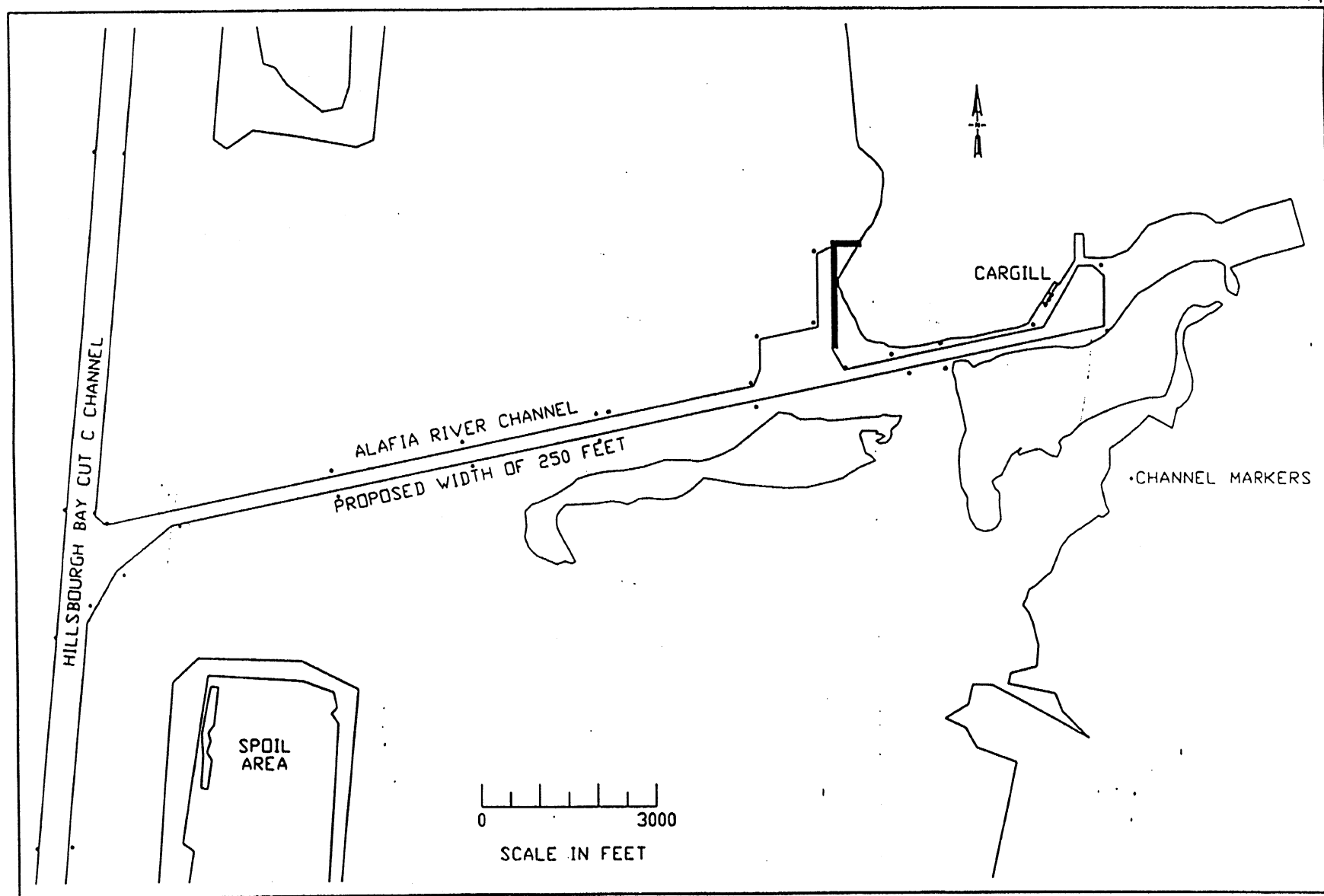


Figure 4. Plan 2 channel and turning basin configuration



STATE OF FLORIDA  
**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS**

*"Helping Floridians create safe, vibrant, sustainable communities"*

**LAWTON CHILES**  
Governor

**JAMES F. MURLEY**  
Secretary

April 15, 1998

Mr. Bill Fonferek  
Department of the Army  
Jacksonville District Corps of Engineers  
Post Office Box 4970  
Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019

RE: Department of the Army - Scoping Letter - Gathering of  
Information about Issues, Concerns, Resources and  
Opportunities Associated with the Ongoing Study of the Tampa  
Harbor-Alafia River Navigation Channel - Hillsborough  
County, Florida  
SAI: FL9802020037C

Dear Mr. Fonferek:

The Florida State Clearinghouse, pursuant to Presidential  
Executive Order 12372, Gubernatorial Executive Order 95-359, the  
Coastal Zone Management Act, 16 U.S.C. §§ 1451-1464, as amended, and  
the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321, 4331-4335,  
4341-4347, as amended, has coordinated a review of the above-  
referenced project.

The Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission (GFWFC) notes  
concern regarding: 1) impacts to adjacent bird rookeries; 2) impacts  
to bay bottoms, including seagrass beds; 3) impacts related to dredged  
material disposal; 4) potential beneficial use of dredged material;  
and 5) conflicts with the restoration of Tampa Bay. Of the two  
alternatives being considered for the turning basin (expansion of the  
existing basin and dredging a new turning basin), the GFWFC indicates  
that the selection of the alternative involving construction of a new  
turning basin would be inconsistent with the Florida Coastal  
Management Program because of the potential for adverse impacts to  
breeding birds and listed species' habitat. Based on the information  
provided, expansion of the existing turning basin will have  
significantly less environmental impact. Suitable dredged materials  
could be used beneficially in restoration projects in the Tampa Bay  
area. The GFWFC notes that the potential for the beneficial use of

**2555 SHUMARD OAK BOULEVARD • TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-2100**

Phone: 850.488.8466/Suncom 278.8466 FAX: 850.921.0781/Suncom 291.0781

Internet address: <http://www.state.fl.us/comaff/dca.html>

**FLORIDA KEYS**  
Area of Critical State Concern Field Office  
2796 Overseas Highway, Suite 212  
Marathon, Florida 33050-2227

**GREEN SWAMP**  
Area of Critical State Concern Field Office  
155 East Summerlin  
Bartow, Florida 33830-4641

**SOUTH FLORIDA RECOVERY OFFICE**  
P.O. Box 4022  
8600 N.W. 36th Street  
Miami, Florida 33159-4022

Mr. Bill Fonferek  
April 15, 1998  
Page Two

dredged materials from the proposed projects does not constitute offset or mitigation of negative project impacts; however, it does prevent misuse or misplacement of dredged material that would otherwise result in additional environmental impacts. No loss of existing seagrass beds should be permitted. The GFWFC notes that the conflict between the deepening and the widening of the channels should be carefully examined. The impacts to water quality and habitat in Tampa Bay, as well as the expenditure of state and federal funds to protect, enhance, and restore habitat should also be carefully examined. Please refer to the enclosed GFWFC comments.

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) notes its concurrence with the issues and concerns raised in the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council's Agency on Bay Management letter to the Corps (copy attached). The DEP also offers comments highlighting additional issues and reiterating prior issues and requests that these issues be fully considered and addressed as part of the Corps' study. The DEP also indicates that if the project is constructed, state water quality certification through issuance of an Environmental Resource Permit will be required. Because the submerged lands in Hillsborough County are not state-owned, a sovereign submerged lands easement will not be required. The applicant should contact the DEP for information regarding specific permitting and manatee issues. Please refer to the enclosed DEP comments and attachment.

The Department of State (DOS) indicates that the proposed activities may adversely impact historic and prehistoric sites. Therefore, the DOS requests that the applicant provide more specific project plans to the DOS when they become available. Please refer to the enclosed DOS comments.

Based on the information contained in the above-referenced scoping letter and the enclosed comments provided by our reviewing agencies, the state has determined that, at this stage, the above-referenced project is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP). However, the applicant is advised to carefully consider the GFWFC's preliminary assessment that the construction of a new turning basin may result in a determination of inconsistency. All subsequent environmental documents prepared for this project must be reviewed to determine the project's continued consistency with the FCMP. The state's continued concurrence with the project will be based, in part, on the adequate resolution of issues identified during this and subsequent reviews. Comments received from the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council and Hillsborough County are also enclosed for your review.



Mr. Bill Fonferek  
April 15, 1998  
Page Three

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed project.  
If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Ms.  
Cherie Trainor, Clearinghouse Coordinator, at (850) 922-5438.

Sincerely,



*for* Ralph Cantral, Executive Director  
Florida Coastal Management Program

RC/cc

Enclosures

cc: Bradley Hartman, Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission  
Jim Wood, Department of Environmental Protection  
George Percy, Department of State  
John Meyer, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council  
Shawn College, Hillsborough County



# Department of Environmental Protection

Lawton Chiles  
Governor

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building  
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Virginia B. Wetherell  
Secretary

**RECEIVED**  
MAR 19 1998

March 16, 1998

State of Florida Clearinghouse

Cherie Trainor  
State Clearinghouse  
Department of Community Affairs  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

RE: COE/Scoping Notice, Tampa Harbor Study - Alafia River Navigation Channel  
SAI: FL9802020037C

Dear Ms. Trainor:

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has completed its review of the above-referenced scoping notice. The Department is represented on the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council's Agency on Bay Management (ABM). In general, the Department concurs with the issues and concerns raised in the ABM letter of February 23, 1998 to the Corps (copy attached). We, nonetheless, offer the following comments which highlight additional issues and reiterate some that were outlined by the Agency on Bay Management. We request that these issues be fully considered and addressed as part of the Corps' study:

- An analysis of dredged material grain size and a geologic investigation to determine the presence of limerock in the project area will be necessary. The study should indicate whether blasting of rock will be required to expand the channel.
- Disposal site identification, dredged material volume, and disposal site capacity estimates should be provided. If there is a beneficial use alternative to disposal of the material, it should be identified.
- Survey information and maps of all submerged biological resources within and adjacent to the channel widener impact area should be provided. If seagrass beds, oyster beds, etc. are identified, mitigation of impacts will be required.
- Information regarding the protection of nesting waterfowl on the "Bird Islands" south of the channel should be clearly outlined. The Corps should be aware of all possible federal and state prohibitions and restrictions during nesting season.

- Manatees are found year round in the Tampa Bay area, and aggregate at the TECO power plant and Port Sutton during winter months. Manatees often disperse from the power plants during aggregation periods in order to feed, and are more widely dispersed during the summer months. The discharge at the Gardiner Phosphate plant located in the Alafia received heavy use by manatees in the 1980's, but reduced discharge has lowered the number of animals who visit the river. Because of the historic presence of manatees in this area, FDEP's Bureau of Protected Species Management (BPSM) requests that the following specific issues be addressed and taken into consideration:
  - potential loss of submerged aquatic vegetation (i.e., seagrass) -- we recommend no significant loss of habitat, especially areas within 10 miles of an aggregation area;
  - protective measures during construction demolition (at a minimum, the standard manatee construction conditions);
  - protective measures during demolition, such as blasting (at a minimum, the standard blasting conditions);
  - time-window for construction/blasting, if the project is located near an important manatee aggregation or foraging area;
  - potential for nighttime dredging -- we recommend that the applicant not performing dredging at night, or at a minimum, restrict the nighttime movement of vessels associated with the project; and
  - the need for a manatee observer during active dredging operations and vessel movement.

The Department's future determination of this project's consistency with the Florida Coastal Management Program will be based upon whether the above issues have been adequately addressed.

#### **Permitting**

If the project is ultimately constructed, it will require state water quality certification via issuance of an Environmental Resource Permit by FDEP's Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems. Because the submerged lands in Hillsborough County are not state-owned (managed by the Tampa Port Authority), a sovereign submerged lands easement/consent of use would not be required.

The Department appreciates the opportunity to review this project. For information regarding specific permitting and manatee issues, please contact Lauren Milligan of the Bureau of Beaches and Coastal Systems (850-487-4471) and Mary Duncan of the Bureau

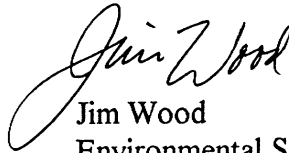
FL9802020037C

March 16, 1998

Page 3

of Protected Species Management (850-922-4330), respectively. If I may be of further assistance, please contact me at 850-487-2231.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jim Wood".

Jim Wood  
Environmental Specialist  
Office of Intergovernmental Programs

/jw

Attachment

cc: Mac Craig, Southwest District  
Mary Duncan, Protected Species  
Lauren Milligan, Beaches and Coastal Systems  
Fritz Wettstein, Marine Resources

tampa bay regional planning council



9455 Koger Boulevard Suite 219  
St. Petersburg, FL 33702-249  
(813) 577-5151/Tampa 224-938  
FAX 570-5118 SunCom 586-3217

**An Alliance of Agencies,  
Organizations and  
Interest Groups for the  
Management of Tampa Bay**

February 23, 1998

John R. Hall, Acting Chief  
Planning Division  
Attention: Environmental Branch  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 4970  
Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019

Dear Chief Hall:

Re: Study of the Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council  
Florida Senate  
Florida House of Representatives  
Tampa Bay National Estuary Program  
Florida Department  
of Environmental Protection  
Florida Marine Research Institute  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Florida Game and  
Fresh Water Fish Commission  
Southwest Florida  
Water Management District  
Florida Sea Grant  
Cargill Fertilizer, Inc.  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Geological Survey  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
MacDill Air Force Base  
Tampa Port Authority  
Manatee Port Authority  
St. Petersburg Port Authority  
Hillsborough County  
Manatee County  
Pasco County  
Pinellas County  
City of Clearwater  
City of Oldsmar  
City of St. Petersburg  
City of Safety Harbor  
City of Tampa  
Environmental Protection Commission  
of Hillsborough County  
Florida Power Corporation  
Tampa Electric Company  
Florida Conservation Association  
Organized Fishermen of Florida  
National Audubon Society  
Hillsborough Environmental Coalition  
University of South Florida  
Hillsborough Community College  
Recreational Interests  
Dames & Moore, Inc.  
Greiner, Inc.  
Tampa BayWatch  
Coastal Environmental, Inc.  
Tampa Bay Pilots

The Executive Steering Committee of the Agency on Bay Management, at its February 12th meeting, voted unanimously to forward the following comments, concerns and questions regarding the above-referenced study.

As presented to the Agency on Bay Management's Natural Resources/ Environmental Impact Review Committee, the study will evaluate various alternatives to providing sufficient turning basin and dockage to accommodate Panamax-sized vessels at the Cargill Fertilizer, Inc. facility and determine the federal interest in the project. This single-user site is located inside the mouth of the Alafia River in northeastern Tampa Bay.

The existing facility includes a 32'-deep, 150'-wide, 3.6-mile long channel from the main Tampa Bay shipping channel to the 700' x 1,200' turning basin. The stated need is for a 1,200' x 1,200' turning basin, a 250'-wide channel and 43' depths to permit Cargill to use Panamax ships, now considered standard for the industry and more economically-competitive. The two alternatives presented to the committee were:

1. Expansion of the existing turning basin. This would entail deepening by 11' and widening by 500' and generation of about 1,000,000 cubic yards of dredged material. The amount of alteration needed to existing facilities was not provided.
2. Dredging/construction of a new turning basin outside and north of the mouth of the Alafia River. This new basin would be more than 25 acres in size and 43' deep, in an area now about 3' deep. Some 4,000,000 cubic yards of dredged material would require disposal. New dockage and transloading facilities would be needed, but the size and location was not provided.

At the Committee meeting many concerns were raised relating to the identification of environmental impacts associated with each alternative. These concerns should be addressed as part of the Corps' study.

A. Regarding expansion of the existing turning basin ("1" above):

1. What habitat would be impacted by basin expansion and channel deepening? How would mitigation be accomplished?
2. How much more maintenance (amount of material and frequency) would be needed than the current project?
3. Would the configuration of the expanded turning basin and increased depth of the channel affect erosion rates of the Bird Islands, the river banks, or other areas?
4. What products will be handled at the expanded facility?

B. Concerning the proposed new turning basin ("2" above):

1. How would the dredged material (an estimated 4 million cubic yards) be disposed - a new island in Tampa Bay, upland, or in open-waters of the Gulf? What would be the primary and secondary impacts of disposal site creation and use?
2. Would the turning basin and increased channel depth affect erosion rates of the Bird Islands, the eastern shoreline of Tampa Bay in the project's vicinity, and elsewhere?
3. Would the basin affect the stability/vulnerability of the nearby gypsum disposal site? Would additional hardening of the shoreline be necessary?
4. Would the basin have an adverse affect on seagrass beds in the vicinity, due to sloughing of the basin sides and the creation of a large sump in the open bay?
5. How many acres of seagrass and other shallow water estuarine habitat would be removed for this alternative, including for necessary docking and transloading equipment?
6. How would mitigation for all primary and secondary impacts be accomplished?
7. How much maintenance (amount of material and frequency) would be needed? Where would this material be disposed?
8. What products would be handled through the new facilities?
9. What would be the fate of the existing basin and channel into the Alafia River?

C. General questions:

1. Would the federal government assume any portion of the responsibility for construction and maintenance of the modified Alafia River Navigation Channel, including a turning basin, for a single user?
2. What beneficial uses are available for the large quantity of material that would be generated by either alternative?

Of considerable concern within Tampa Bay is the potential for a finding of federal interest in a single-user project such as this. A positive finding would set a serious precedent within the estuary, where industrialization has been planned, developed and supported by federal involvement in two areas. Significant expansion of federal involvement into an area with many high quality environmental values. Without substantial, over-riding public interest, such a project is contrary to regional, state and federal policies.

The Agency on Bay Management offers its assistance in the evaluation of the two alternatives for improved vessel access to the Cargill Fertilizer facility. Any questions or request for background information which the Agency might have on the Alafia River or Tampa Bay should be directed to Ms. Suzanne Cooper, 9455 Koger Blvd., Suite 219, St. Petersburg, FL 33702 (813) 577-5151, Ext. 240. Please ensure that a copy of the study, including responses to the comments and questions in this letter is provided to the Agency on Bay Management, care of Ms. Cooper.

Thank you for addressing these comments and questions within the study.

Sincerely,



Barbara B. Romano  
Chair

cc: Mr. Gray Gordon  
Mr. Tim Murphy





## FLORIDA GAME AND FRESH WATER FISH COMMISSION



QUINTON L. HEDGEPEETH, DDS   MRS. GILBERT W. HUMPHREY   THOMAS B. KIBLER   JAMES L. "JAMIE" ADAMS JR.   JULIE K. MORRIS  
Miami   Miccosukee   Lakeland   Bushnell   Sarasota

ALLAN L. EGBERT, Ph.D., Executive Director  
VICTOR J. HELLER, Assistant Executive Director

Ms. Cherie Trainor, Director  
Florida State Clearinghouse  
Department of Community Affairs  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

April 9, 1998

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
BRADLEY J. HARTMAN, Director  
FAREIS BRYANT BUILDING  
100 South Meridian Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600  
(850) 488-6661  
SUNCOM 278-6661  
FAX (850) 922-5679  
TDD (850) 488-9542

**RECEIVED**  
APR 14 1998  
State of Florida Clearinghouse

Re:   SAI #FL9802020037C, U.S. Army  
Corps of Engineers, Hillsborough  
County, Alafia River Navigation  
Channel

Dear Ms. Trainor:

The Office of Environmental Services of the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission has reviewed the referenced project, and offers the following comments.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is evaluating various alternatives for providing a turning basin and dockage to accommodate Panamax-sized vessels at the Cargill Fertilizer, Inc. facility, a single-user site located inside the mouth of the Alafia River on eastern Tampa Bay. The existing facility includes a 32-foot-deep, 150-foot-wide, 3.6-mile-long channel from the main Tampa Bay shipping channel to the 700-foot by 1,200-foot-wide turning basin. The anticipated need is for a 1,200-foot by 1,200-foot turning basin, a 250-foot-wide channel, and 43 feet of depth to allow use of Panamax ships.

Two alternatives are being considered for the turning basin: 1) expansion of the existing basin by deepening the basin by 11 feet and widening it by 500 feet, and 2) dredging a new 25-acre turning basin outside and north of the mouth of the Alafia River to a depth of 43 feet. The expansion would generate one million cubic yards of spoil. A new basin would generate 4 million cubic yards of spoil, and require new dockage and transloading facilities.

We have the following concerns with regard to the referenced project: 1) impacts to adjacent bird rookeries; 2) impacts to bay bottoms, including seagrass beds; 3) impacts related to spoil disposal, including islands 2D and 3D; 4) potential beneficial uses of generated spoil material; 5) and conflicts with the restoration of Tampa Bay.



Ms. Cherie Trainor  
April 9, 1998  
Page 2

The Alafia Channel is adjacent to the Alafia Banks, a significant nesting habitat for 22 species of birds, including nine species listed as state species of special concern (SSC) and two listed as threatened (T). The Alafia Banks is one of the most important breeding areas in the nation, and is ranked by the Florida Audubon Society as Florida's number one colony. Erosion of the Alafia Banks is an on-going problem. The potential exists that ship traffic utilizing an expanded turning basin and channel may exacerbate erosion on the Alafia Banks, and negatively impact foraging and nesting habitat for the colony via noise, lighting at night, spills, and spill containment. Relocated dock and handling operations also have the potential to negatively impact bird nesting, since the new basin would be immediately across the channel from the Alafia Banks.

Spoil islands 2D and 3D are nationally significant colonial nesting bird rookeries that support least terns (T), black skimmers (SSC), American oystercatchers (SSC), 20,000 to 40,000 pairs of laughing gulls, royal terns, sandwich terns, and the only Florida colony of the Caspian tern. The provision to allow open-water spoiling to create islands 2D and 3D was predicated upon their use as facilities to maintain the existing navigation channels in Tampa Bay. The addition of spoil material from new excavations could substantially reduce the build-out lifetime for these islands. This could create the need for additional open water spoiling and concurrent impacts associated with spoil activities.

The new turning basin alternative would result in the elimination of approximately 25 acres of shallow (3-foot average) bay bottom, including an unknown amount of mixed seagrasses. Broadcast turbidity from basin construction may impact wide areas of shallow bottom, including seagrass beds beyond the footprint of the proposed new basin. Seagrass beds are also present in the areas surrounding the existing channel. The endangered Florida (West Indian) manatee utilizes the proposed turning basin area for foraging and the existing turning basin area for temperature refuge.

We believe that the alternative involving construction of a new turning basin is inconsistent with the Coastal Zone Management Act, in that it has a high potential to unacceptably impact breeding birds and listed species habitat.

Based on the information provided, expansion of the existing turning basin should have significantly less environmental impact. Suitable spoil could be used beneficially in pursuit of existing restoration projects in the Tampa Bay area. In order of preference, we recommend suitable spoil use at the Alafia Banks to offset existing erosion, at the Cockroach Bay-Restoration Site to fill old shell pits and build xeric habitat, and at the Palm River to fill deep dredge holes. Any proposed spoil deposition on existing spoil islands 2D and 3D should occur only between the months of September to March, outside of breeding bird season. The potential to beneficially use spoil from the proposed projects does not constitute off-set or mitigation of negative project


Ms. Cherie Trainor  
April 9, 1998  
Page 3

impacts, however it does prevent misuse or misplacement of spoil that results in additional environmental impact. No loss of existing seagrass beds should be permitted.

A careful examination is needed of the conflict between deepening and widening channels, thus impacting water quality and habitat in Tampa Bay, and the expenditure of state and federal funds to protect, enhance, and restore habitat. This examination should be consistent with the Tampa Bay National Estuary Program Coordinated Conservation and Management Plan, and the Southwest Florida Water Management District Surface Water Improvement Management Plan.

Please call me at (850) 488-6661 or Mr. Jim Beaver at (941) 575-5765 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

  
Bradley J. Hartman, Director  
Office of Environmental Services

BJH/JWB  
ENV 1-3-2

alafiar.sai

cc: Mr. John R. Hall, Acting Chief  
Planning Division  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 4970  
Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019

Ms. Deborah Manz, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
c/o U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 19247  
Tampa, Florida 33686-9247

Ms. Suzanne Cooper  
Agency on Bay Management  
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council  
9455 Koger Boulevard  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702-2491

COUNTY: Hillsborough

DATE: 02/02/98

COMMENTS DUE-2 WKS: 02/17/98

CLEARANCE DUE DATE: 03/19/98

SAI#: FL9802020037C

Message:

STATE AGENCIES

WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS

OPB POLICY UNITS

Community Affairs  
Environmental Protection  
Game and Fresh Water Fish Comm  
X Marine Fisheries Commission  
State  
Transportation

Southwest Florida WMD

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FEB 13 1998  
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Environmental Policy/C & ED

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FEB 05 1998  
MARINE FISHERIES  
COMMISSION

The attached document requires a Coastal Zone Management Act/Florida Coastal Management Program consistency evaluation and is categorized as one of the following:

— Federal Assistance to State or Local Government (15 CFR 930, Subpart F). Agencies are required to evaluate the consistency of the activity.

X Direct Federal Activity (15 CFR 930, Subpart C). Federal Agencies are required to furnish a consistency determination for the State's concurrence or objection.

— Outer Continental Shelf Exploration, Development or Production Activities (15 CFR 930, Subpart E). Operators are required to provide a consistency certification for state concurrence/objection.

— Federal Licensing or Permitting Activity (15 CFR 930, Subpart D). Such projects will only be evaluated for consistency when there is not an analogous state license or permit.

Project Description:

Department of the Army - Scoping Letter - Gathering of Information about Issues, Concerns, Resources and Opportunities Associated with the Ongoing Study of the Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel - Hillsborough County, Florida.

To: Florida State Clearinghouse  
Department of Community Affairs  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100  
(850) 922-5438 (SC 292-5438)  
(904) 414-0479 (FAX)

EO. 12372/NEPA

Federal Consistency

☐ No Comment  
☐ Comments Attached  
☐ Not Applicable

☐ No Comment/Consistent  
☐ Consistent/Comments Attached  
☐ Inconsistent/Comments Attached  
☒ Not Applicable

From:

Division/Bureau:

Reviewer:

Date:

*[Signature]*  
2/11/98

DIVISIONS OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Secretary  
Office of International Relations  
Division of Administrative Services  
Division of Corporations  
Division of Cultural Affairs  
Division of Elections  
Division of Historical Resources  
Division of Library and Information Services  
Division of Licensing



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
**Sandra B. Mortham**  
Secretary of State  
DIVISION OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES

MEMBER OF THE FLORIDA CABINET  
Historic Florida Keys Preservation Board  
Historic Palm Beach County Preservation Board  
Historic Pensacola Preservation Board  
Historic St. Augustine Preservation Board  
Historic Tallahassee Preservation Board  
Historic Tampa/Hillsborough County  
Historic Volusia County Preservation Board  
Historic Museum of Art

**RECEIVED**  
MAR 24 1998

March 20, 1998

Ms. Cherie Trainor  
State Clearinghouse  
Department of Community Affairs  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

In Reply Refer To: **State of Florida Clearinghouse**  
Robin D. Jackson  
Historic Sites Specialist  
Project File No. 980608

RE: Cultural Resource Assessment Request  
SAI #FL9802020037C  
Department of the Army, Scoping Letter, Gathering of Information about Issues,  
Concerns, Resources and Opportunities Associated with the Ongoing Study of the Tampa  
Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel  
Hillsborough County, Florida

Dear Ms. Trainor:

In accordance with the provisions of Florida's Coastal Zone Management Act and Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes*, as well as the procedures contained in 36 C.F.R., Part 800 ("Protection of Historic Properties"), we have reviewed the referenced project(s) for possible impact to historic properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the *National Register of Historic Places*, or otherwise of historical or architectural value.

It is the opinion of this office that the proposed activities have the potential to affect historic and prehistoric sites. Therefore, it is our recommendation that the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers provide this office with more specific project plans (when they become available), in order that we can more accurately assess the potential impact of this project on historic resources. If the above condition is met, this project will also be consistent with the historic preservation laws of Florida's Coastal Management Program.

If you have any questions concerning our comments, please do not hesitate to contact us. Your interest in protecting Florida's historic properties is appreciated.

Sincerely,

*for* *Laura R. Kammeyer*  
George W. Percy, Director  
Division of Historical Resources  
and  
State Historic Preservation Officer

GWP/Jrj  
xc: Jasmin Raffington, FCMP-DCA

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

R.A. Gray Building • 500 South Bronough Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250 • (904) 488-1480  
FAX: (904) 488-3353 • WWW Address <http://www.dos.state.fl.us>

☐ ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH  
(904) 487-2299 • FAX: 414-2207

☒ HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
(904) 487-2333 • FAX: 922-0496

☐ HISTORICAL MUSEUMS  
(904) 488-1464 • FAX: 921-2503

COUNTY: Hillsborough

DATE: 02/02/98

COMMENTS DUE-2 WKS: 02/17/98

Message:

CLEARANCE DUE DATE: 03/19/98

SAI#: FL9802020037C

STATE AGENCIES

WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS

OPB POLICY UNITS

Community Affairs  
Environmental Protection  
Game and Fresh Water Fish Comm  
Marine Fisheries Commission  
State

X Transportation

Southwest Florida WMD

**RECEIVED**  
FEB 20 1998

State of Florida Clearinghouse

Environmental Policy/C & ED

The attached document requires a Coastal Zone Management Act/Florida Coastal Management Program consistency evaluation and is categorized as one of the following:

- Federal Assistance to State or Local Government (15 CFR 930, Subpart F). Agencies are required to evaluate the consistency of the activity.
- X Direct Federal Activity (15 CFR 930, Subpart C). Federal Agencies are required to furnish a consistency determination for the State's concurrence or objection.
- Outer Continental Shelf Exploration, Development or Production Activities (15 CFR 930, Subpart E). Operators are required to provide a consistency certification for state concurrence/objection.
- Federal Licensing or Permitting Activity (15 CFR 930, Subpart D). Such projects will only be evaluated for consistency when there is not an analogous state license or permit.

Project Description:

Department of the Army - Scoping Letter - Gathering of Information about Issues, Concerns, Resources and Opportunities Associated with the Ongoing Study of the Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel - Hillsborough County, Florida.

To: Florida State Clearinghouse  
Department of Community Affairs  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100  
(850) 922-5438 (SC 292-5438)  
(904) 414-0479 (FAX)

EO. 12372/NEPA

- ☒ No Comment  
☐ Comments Attached  
☐ Not Applicable

Federal Consistency

- ☐ No Comment/Consistent  
☐ Consistent/Comments Attached  
☐ Inconsistent/Comments Attached  
☐ Not Applicable

From:

Division/Bureau: PD&E D7

Reviewer: Rick Adair

Date: 2/16/98



An Equal Opportunity Employer

# Southwest Florida Water Management District

2379 Broad Street • Brooksville, Florida 34609-6899 • 1-800-423-1476 (Florida Only)  
or (352) 796-7211 • SUNCOM 628-4150 • T.D.D. Number Only (Florida Only): 1-800-231-6103  
Internet address: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/swfwmd>

7601 Highway 301 North  
Tampa, Florida 33637-6759  
1-800-836-0797 or (813) 985-7481  
SUNCOM 578-2070

170 Century Boulevard  
Bartow, Florida 33830-7700  
1-800-492-7862 or (941) 534-1448  
SUNCOM 572-6200

115 Corporation Way  
Venice, Florida 34292-3524  
1-800-320-3503 or (941) 486-1212  
SUNCOM 526-6900

2303 Highway 44 West  
Inverness, Florida 34453-3809  
(352) 637-1360  
SUNCOM 667-3271

March 12, 1998

Ms. Keri Akers  
Florida State Clearinghouse  
Department of Community Affairs  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2100

**RECEIVED**  
MAR 16 1998

**State of Florida Clearinghouse**

Subject: Department of the Army-Scoping Letter-Gathering Information about  
Issues, Concerns, Resources and Opportunities Associated with the  
Ongoing Study of the Tampa Harbor-Alafia River Navigation Channel-  
Hillsborough County, Florida  
SAI# FL9802020037C

Dear Ms. Akers:

The staff of the Southwest Florida Water Management District (District) has conducted a consistency evaluation for the referenced project. Consistency findings are divided into four categories and are based solely on the information provided in the subject application.

FINDING	CATEGORY
X	Consistent/No Comment
	Consistent/Comments Attached
	Inconsistent/Comments Attached
	Consistency Cannot be Determined Without an Environmental Assessment Report/Comments Attached

The District appreciates the opportunity to participate in the review of this application. Please be advised that our review does not constitute permit approval under Chapter 373, Florida Statutes, or any rules promulgated thereunder, nor does it stand in lieu of normal permitting procedures in accordance with Florida Statutes and District rules.

If you have any questions or if I can be of further assistance, please contact me in the District's Planning Department.

Sincerely,

*Trisha Neasman*

Trisha Neasman, AICP  
Government Planning Coordinator

Roy G. Harrell, Jr.  
Chairman, St. Petersburg  
Joe L. Davis, Jr.  
Vice Chairman, Wauchula  
Curtis L. Law  
Secretary, Land O' Lakes  
Sally Thompson  
Treasurer, Tampa  
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Rebecca M. Eger  
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Bradenton  
Ronald C. Johnson  
Lake Wales  
James E. Martin  
St. Petersburg  
Brenda Menendez  
Tampa

E. D. "Sonny" Vergara  
Executive Director  
Gene A. Heath  
Assistant Executive Director  
Edward B. Helvenston  
General Counsel

*Excellence  
Through  
Quality  
Service*

COUNTY: Hillsborough

DATE: 02/02/98

COMMENTS DUE-2 WKS: 02/17/98

CLEARANCE DUE DATE: 03/19/98

SAI#: FL9802020037C

Message:

STATE AGENCIES

Community Affairs  
Environmental Protection  
Game and Fresh Water Fish Comm  
Marine Fisheries Commission  
State  
Transportation

WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS

Southwest Florida WMD

OPB POLICY UNITS

X Environmental Policy/C & ED

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MAR 02 1998

State of Florida Clearinghouse

RECEIVED

FEB 4 1998

OFFICE OF PLANNING  
& BUDGETING  
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY UNIT

The attached document requires a Coastal Zone Management Act/Florida Coastal Management Program consistency evaluation and is categorized as one of the following:

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- X Direct Federal Activity (15 CFR 930, Subpart C). Federal Agencies are required to furnish a consistency determination for the State's concurrence or objection.
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- Federal Licensing or Permitting Activity (15 CFR 930, Subpart D). Such projects will only be evaluated for consistency when there is not an analogous state license or permit.

Project Description:

Department of the Army - Scoping Letter - Gathering of Information about Issues, Concerns, Resources and Opportunities Associated with the Ongoing Study of the Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel - Hillsborough County, Florida.

To: Florida State Clearinghouse  
Department of Community Affairs  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100  
(850) 922-5438 (SC 292-5438)  
(904) 414-0479 (FAX)

EO. 12372/NEPA

Federal Consistency

- ☒ No Comment  
☒ Comments Attached  
☐ Not Applicable

- ☐ No Comment/Consistent  
☐ Consistent/Comments Attached  
☐ Inconsistent/Comments Attached  
☐ Not Applicable

From:

Division/Bureau:

Reviewer:

Date:

OPB/ENV.

Carla S. Schumacher

2-25-98

Please inform the Corps that better detailed maps would facilitate the review. Thank you

04/9/98

**FLORIDA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE  
RPC INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION  
AND RESPONSE SHEET**

REG

SAI#: FL9802020037C

DATE: 02/02/98

COMMENTS DUE TO CLEARINGHOUSE: 03/04/98

AREA OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY: COUNTY: Hillsborough

☐ FEDERAL ASSISTANCE ☒ DIRECT FEDERAL ACTIVITY ☐ FEDERAL LICENSE OR PERMIT ☐ OCS

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Department of the Army - Scoping Letter - Gathering of Information about Issues, Concerns, Resources and Opportunities Associated with the Ongoing Study of the Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel - Hillsborough County, Florida.

**ROUTING:**RPC

X Tampa Bay RPC

Comments Attached

PLEASE CHECK ALL THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS BELOW FROM WHICH COMMENTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED; ALL COMMENTS RECEIVED SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE RPC'S CLEARINGHOUSE RESPONSE PACKAGE. IF NO COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED, PLEASE CHECK "NO COMMENT" BOX AND RETURN TO CLEARINGHOUSE.

COMMENTS DUE TO RPC: 02/23/98

✓ Hillsborough County — Comments Attached

NO COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

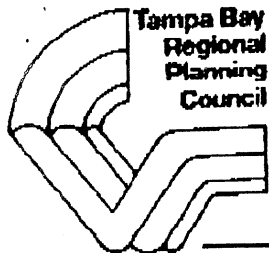
(IF THE RPC DOES NOT RECEIVE COMMENTS BY THE DEADLINE DATE, THE RPC SHOULD CONTACT THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO DETERMINE THE STATUS OF THE PROJECT REVIEW PRIOR TO FORWARDING THE RESPONSE PACKAGE TO THE CLEARINGHOUSE.)

NOTES:

ALL CONCERNS OR COMMENTS REGARDING THE ATTACHED PROJECT (INCLUDING ANY RPC COMMENTS) SHOULD BE SENT IN WRITING BY THE DUE DATE TO THE CLEARINGHOUSE. PLEASE ATTACH THIS RESPONSE FORM AND REFER TO THE SAI # IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ATTACHED PROJECT, PLEASE CONTACT THE STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AT (904) 922-5438 OR SUNCOM 272-5438.





Agenda Item #2.F.2.  
CRC - 2/23/98

# Clearinghouse Review

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TAMPA HARBOR - ALAFIA RIVER NAVIGATION CHANNEL, HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY.  
IC&R #049-98.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is seeking information about issues, concerns, resources, and opportunities associated with the study of this project. The study is to determine the federal interest in deepening and widening the navigational channel, which is located in central Hillsborough County at the mouth of the Alafia River. The study entails determining if the existing channel is adequately sized to safely accommodate the types of vessels projected to use it. Additionally, the study will examine the viability of the existing turning basin, if it could be expanded, or if an additional turning basin is warranted.

The existing 3.6-mile channel is authorized at 200 feet wide and 30 feet deep, extending from the main shipping channel to the turning basin for the Cargill Fertilizer facility. It was first authorized in the 1890s, and last expanded in about 1950. The proposed channel dimensions are 250 feet wide and 43 feet deep.

The existing turning basin, located inside the mouth of the Alafia River, is 700 feet wide and 1,200 feet long. The northern side is hardened by bulkheads, forming mooring sites. Alternatives have been advanced for increasing turning area, enlargement of the current basin to provide a 1,200-foot turning radius of appropriate depth, or creation of a new turning basin in eastern Hillsborough Bay north of the mouth of the Alafia River.

## Council Comments/Concerns

The information provided in the scoping letter was too brief to determine the proposed extent of either alternative. However, based upon knowledge of the Alafia River and this area of Hillsborough Bay, a number of potentially-adverse environmental impacts are apparent, and warrant thorough investigation.

The Council's Agency on Bay Management received a briefing from Mr. Tim Murphy, project director for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, at its Natural Resources/ Environmental Impact Review Committee meeting on February 12th. It was stated that the proposed Hillsborough Bay location of a new turning basin is inconsistent with the *Future of the Region: A Strategic Regional Policy Plan for the Tampa Bay Region*, the wetland rules of the Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County, the Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan and the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Tampa Bay. The construction of a new turning basin appears to be inconsistent with policies 4.1.6, 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.5.14, 4.7.1, and 4.7.6. The following questions/concerns were identified:

- What will be the primary and secondary impacts of constructing a 43-foot deep turning basin, to total over 30 acres in size, in the shallow waters of Hillsborough Bay adjacent to the Alafia River channel? Assess the potential for change in the hydrodynamics of the area - increased erosion of the Bird Islands and the shoreline south of the site; loss of seagrass beds within the site; sloughing and subsequent loss of seagrasses adjacent to the site; and other potential affects.
- What is the calculated amount of maintenance which will be needed to maintain the outer turning basin - how much material per year? How would this compare to the amount needed to maintain the existing turning basin, if expanded to meet the desired limits?
- How much dredged material will be generated by each alternative; where will it be placed; and what alternative, beneficial uses are possible?
- What will be the impact of further industrializing this area of the Bay?
- How will the federal interest in construction of this project be justified, considering that one criteria required to determine such is multiple users and this is a single-user project?

#### Recommendation

It is recommended that the above-stated questions and concerns be addressed as part of any further study of this project

Further, it is recommended that any additional comments addressing local concerns be considered.

Committee adopted February 23, 1998.



Barbara Romano, Chair  
Clearinghouse Review Committee

This proposal has been reviewed for consistency with the Council's adopted growth policy, *Future of the Region: A Strategic Regional Policy Plan for the Tampa Bay Region*. Any further study should include a determination of how the project can be made consistent with adopted local, regional, and state policies.

Local Comments Requested From:

Agency	Request Date
Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County	2/6/98
Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission	2/6/98
Hillsborough County Planning & Growth Management	2/6/98

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Committee's comments constitute compliance with Florida's Intergovernmental Coordination and Review process only.

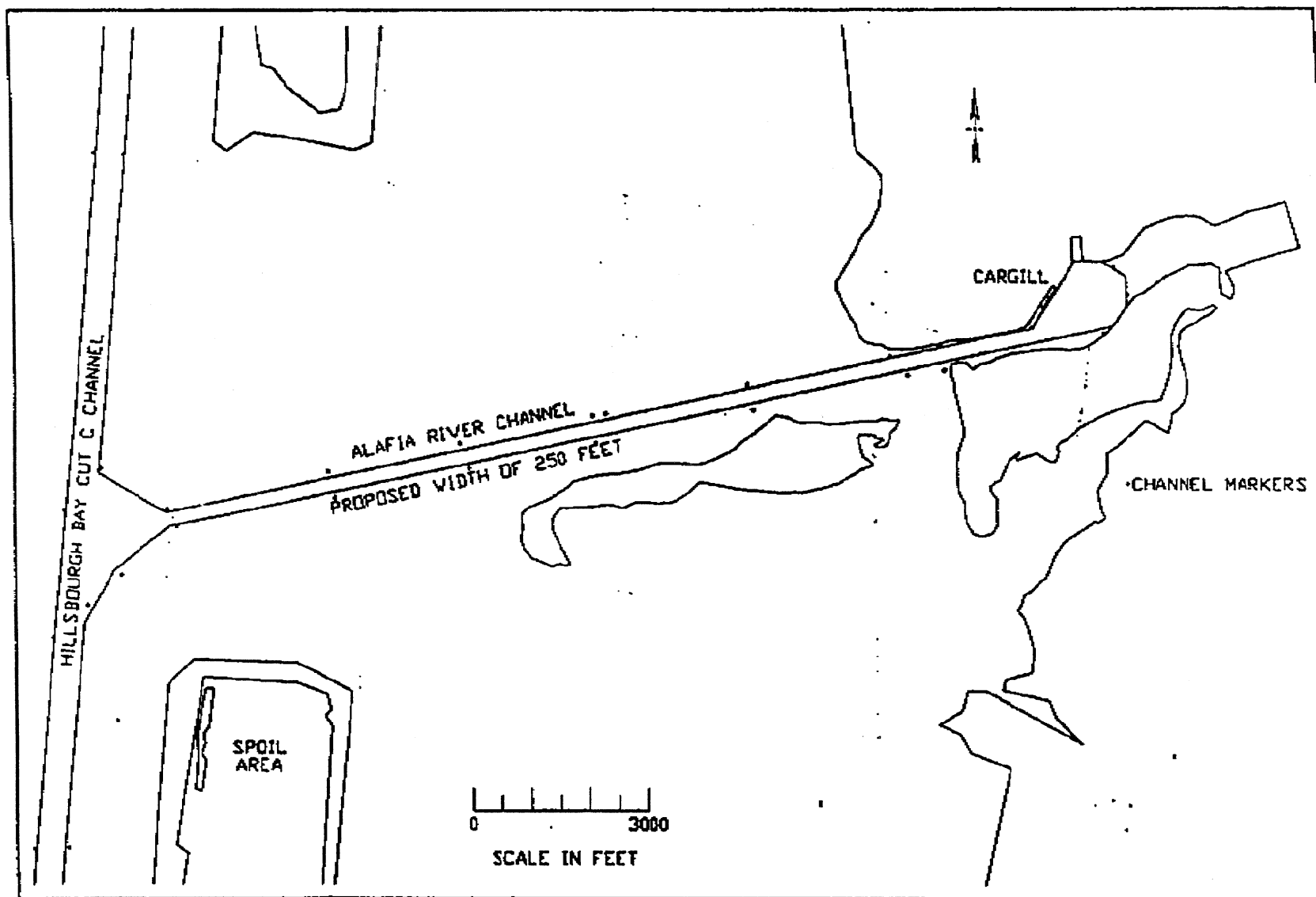


Figure 2. Plan 1 channel and turning basin configuration

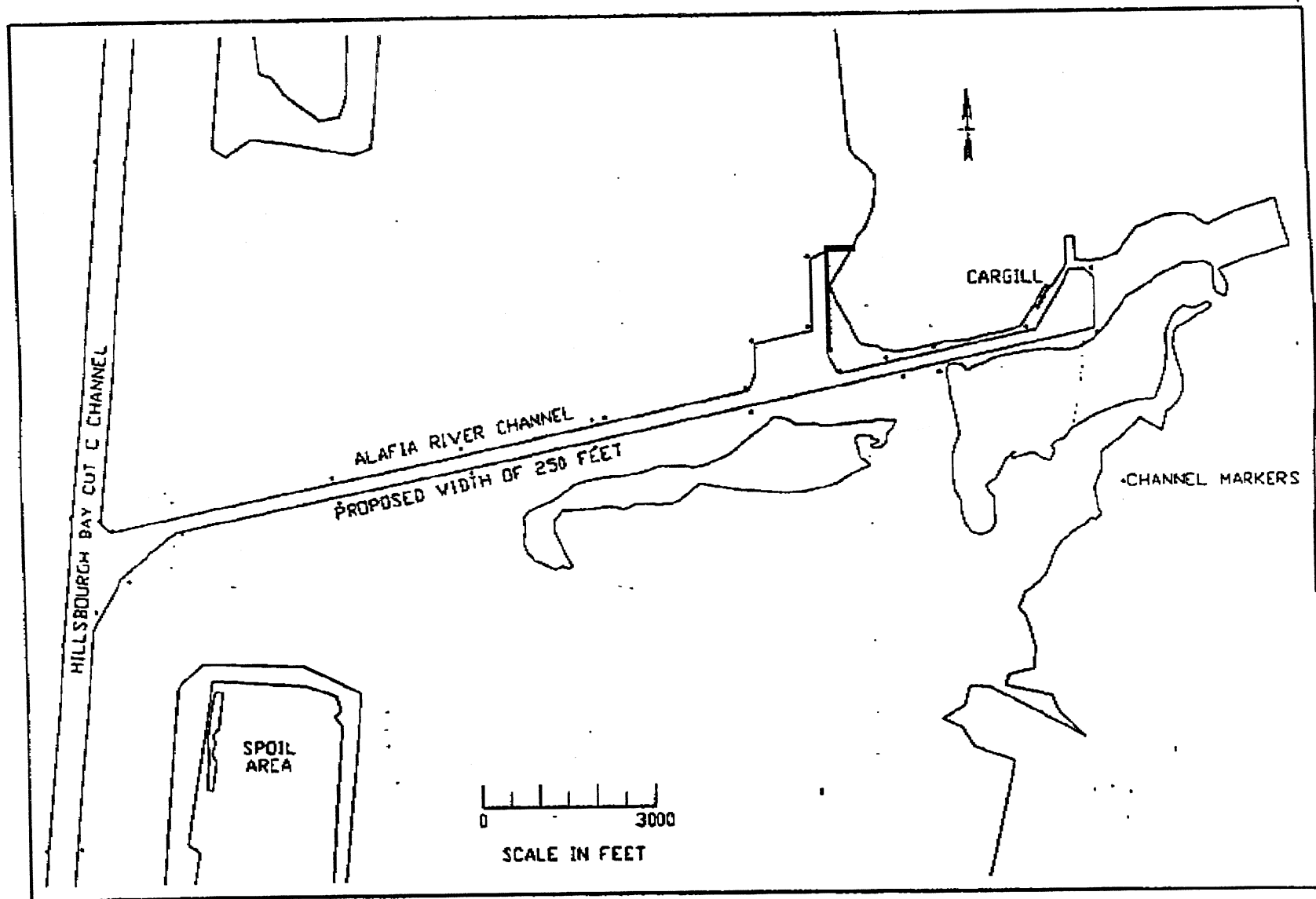


Figure 4. Plan 2 channel and turning basin configuration

Hillsborough County  
City-County  
Planning  
Commission

## THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Michael M. English  
Chairman

February 13, 1998

Jan T. Smith  
Vice-Chairman

Mary C. Alvarez  
Member-at-Large

Edward D. Dees  
Ronald A. Govin

J. E. (Dooley) Houghtaling  
W. C. Meriwether  
Demetria L. Merrill  
Laura Swain  
Warren J. Weathers

John Meyer  
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council  
9455 Koger Boulevard, Suite 219  
St. Petersburg, FL 33702-2491

RE: SAI#FL9802020037C, Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigational Channel

Dear Mr. Meyer:

Robert B. Hunter, AICP  
Executive Director

From the information at hand, it seems that the determination as to whether the improvements of the channel and turning basin are necessary for the safety and efficiency of the channel has yet to be made. The Planning Commission has previously supported dredging for the maintenance of existing channels. However, new dredging projects should firstly demonstrate a substantial need for the project and secondly demonstrate project benefits and appropriate measures to minimize and mitigate potential environmental costs.

The described dredging activities have the potential to cause detrimental effects on seagrasses, areas with the potential for seagrass recovery and other benthic communities; cause or accelerate shoreline erosion; degrade littoral zone environments; and impact avian and manatee habitats.

Information demonstrating the need and benefits of this project and their relation to the potential environmental costs is of great importance to its consideration. However, the Planning Commission has not yet received such information.

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this project, we look foreword to continued involvement as additional information becomes available.

Sincerely,



Shawn C. College, AICP  
Senior Planner

601 E. Kennedy, 18th Floor  
P.O. Box 1110  
Tampa, Florida 33601-1110  
813/272-5940  
FAX 813/272-6258  
FAX 813/272-6255  
Internet E-Mail:  
planning@cftnet.com

A Consolidated City-County Agency serving the cities of Tampa, Plant City, Temple Terrace and the County of Hillsborough  
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tampa bay regional planning council



9455 Koger Boulevard Suite 219  
St. Petersburg, FL 33702-249  
(813) 577-5151/Tampa 224-938  
FAX 570-5118 SunCom 586-3217

**An Alliance of Agencies,  
Organizations and  
Interest Groups for the  
Management of Tampa Bay**

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council  
Florida Senate  
Florida House of Representatives  
Tampa Bay National Estuary Program  
Florida Department  
of Environmental Protection  
Florida Marine Research Institute  
Florida Department of Transportation  
Florida Game and  
Fresh Water Fish Commission  
Southwest Florida  
Water Management District  
Florida Sea Grant  
Cargill Fertilizer, Inc.  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Geological Survey  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
MacDill Air Force Base  
Tampa Port Authority  
Manatee Port Authority  
St. Petersburg Port Authority  
Hillsborough County  
Manatee County  
Pasco County  
Pinellas County  
City of Clearwater  
City of Oldsmar  
City of St. Petersburg  
City of Safety Harbor  
City of Tampa  
Environmental Protection Commission  
of Hillsborough County  
Florida Power Corporation  
Tampa Electric Company  
Florida Conservation Association  
Organized Fishermen of Florida  
National Audubon Society  
Hillsborough Environmental Coalition  
University of South Florida  
Hillsborough Community College  
Recreational Interests  
Dames & Moore, Inc.  
Greiner, Inc.  
Tampa BayWatch  
Coastal Environmental, Inc.  
Tampa Bay Pilots

February 23, 1998

John R. Hall, Acting Chief  
Planning Division  
Attention: Environmental Branch  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
P.O. Box 4970  
Jacksonville, FL 32232-0019

Dear Chief Hall:

Re: Study of the Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel

The Executive Steering Committee of the Agency on Bay Management, at its February 12th meeting, voted unanimously to forward the following comments, concerns and questions regarding the above-referenced study.

As presented to the Agency on Bay Management's Natural Resources/ Environmental Impact Review Committee, the study will evaluate various alternatives to providing sufficient turning basin and dockage to accommodate Panamax-sized vessels at the Cargill Fertilizer, Inc. facility and determine the federal interest in the project. This single-user site is located inside the mouth of the Alafia River in northeastern Tampa Bay.

The existing facility includes a 32'-deep, 150'-wide, 3.6-mile long channel from the main Tampa Bay shipping channel to the 700' x 1,200' turning basin. The stated need is for a 1,200' x 1,200' turning basin, a 250'-wide channel and 43' depths to permit Cargill to use Panamax ships, now considered standard for the industry and more economically-competitive. The two alternatives presented to the committee were:

1. Expansion of the existing turning basin. This would entail deepening by 11' and widening by 500' and generation of about 1,000,000 cubic yards of dredged material. The amount of alteration needed to existing facilities was not provided.
2. Dredging/construction of a new turning basin outside and north of the mouth of the Alafia River. This new basin would be more than 25 acres in size and 43' deep, in an area now about 3' deep. Some 4,000,000 cubic yards of dredged material would require disposal. New dockage and transloading facilities would be needed, but the size and location was not provided.

At the Committee meeting many concerns were raised relating to the identification of environmental impacts associated with each alternative. These concerns should be addressed as part of the Corps' study.

A. Regarding expansion of the existing turning basin ("1" above):

1. What habitat would be impacted by basin expansion and channel deepening? How would mitigation be accomplished?
2. How much more maintenance (amount of material and frequency) would be needed than the current project?
3. Would the configuration of the expanded turning basin and increased depth of the channel affect erosion rates of the Bird Islands, the river banks, or other areas?
4. What products will be handled at the expanded facility?

B. Concerning the proposed new turning basin ("2" above):

1. How would the dredged material (an estimated 4 million cubic yards) be disposed - a new island in Tampa Bay, upland, or in open-waters of the Gulf? What would be the primary and secondary impacts of disposal site creation and use?
2. Would the turning basin and increased channel depth affect erosion rates of the Bird Islands, the eastern shoreline of Tampa Bay in the project's vicinity, and elsewhere?
3. Would the basin affect the stability/vulnerability of the nearby gypsum disposal site? Would additional hardening of the shoreline be necessary?
4. Would the basin have an adverse affect on seagrass beds in the vicinity, due to sloughing of the basin sides and the creation of a large sump in the open bay?
5. How many acres of seagrass and other shallow water estuarine habitat would be removed for this alternative, including for necessary docking and transloading equipment?
6. How would mitigation for all primary and secondary impacts be accomplished?
7. How much maintenance (amount of material and frequency) would be needed? Where would this material be disposed?
8. What products would be handled through the new facilities?
9. What would be the fate of the existing basin and channel into the Alafia River?

C. General questions:

1. Would the federal government assume any portion of the responsibility for construction and maintenance of the modified Alafia River Navigation Channel, including a turning basin, for a single user?
2. What beneficial uses are available for the large quantity of material that would be generated by either alternative?

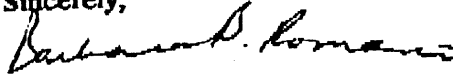
Of considerable concern within Tampa Bay is the potential for a finding of federal interest in a single-user project such as this. A positive finding would set a serious precedent within the estuary, where industrialization has been planned, developed and supported by federal involvement in two areas. Significant expansion of federal involvement into an area with many high quality environmental values. Without substantial, over-riding public interest, such a project is contrary to regional, state and federal policies.



The Agency on Bay Management offers its assistance in the evaluation of the two alternatives for improved vessel access to the Cargill Fertilizer facility. Any questions or request for background information which the Agency might have on the Alafia River or Tampa Bay should be directed to Ms. Suzanne Cooper, 9455 Koger Blvd., Suite 219, St. Petersburg, FL 33702 (813) 577-5151, Ext. 240. Please ensure that a copy of the study, including responses to the comments and questions in this letter is provided to the Agency on Bay Management, care of Ms. Cooper.

Thank you for addressing these comments and questions within the study.

Sincerely,



Barbara B. Romano  
Chair

cc: Mr. Gray Gordon  
Mr. Tim Murphy  
Mr. George Henderson

Hillsborough County  
City-County  
Planning  
Commission

# THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Michael M. English  
*Chairman*

February 13, 1998

Jan T. Smith  
*Vice-Chairman*

John Meyer

Mary C. Alvarez  
*Member-at-Large*

Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council  
9455 Koger Boulevard, Suite 219  
St. Petersburg, FL 33702-2491

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Warren J. Weathers

RE: SAI#FL9802020037C, Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigational Channel

Dear Mr. Meyer:

Robert B. Hunter, AICP  
*Executive Director*

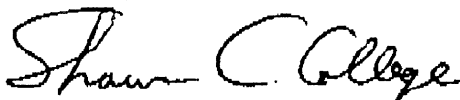
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Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this project, we look forward to continued involvement as additional information becomes available.

Sincerely,



Shawn C. College, AICP  
Senior Planner

601 E. Kennedy, 18th Floor  
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Tampa, Florida 33601-1110  
813/272-5940  
FAX 813/272-6268  
FAX 813/272-6255  
Internet E-Mail:  
planning@cfhnet.com



STATE OF FLORIDA

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

*"Helping Floridians create safe, vibrant, sustainable communities"*

LAWTON CHILES  
Governor

JAMES F. MURLEY  
Secretary

March 13, 1998

Mr. Bill Fonferek  
Department of the Army  
Jacksonville District Corps of Engineers  
Post Office Box 4970  
Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019

RE: Department of the Army - Scoping Letter - Gathering of  
Information about Issues, Concerns, Resources and  
Opportunities Associated with the Ongoing Study of the  
Tampa Harbor - Alafia River Navigation Channel -  
Hillsborough County, Florida  
SAI: FL9802020037C

Dear Mr. Fonferek:

The Florida State Clearinghouse has been advised that our reviewing agencies require additional time to complete the review of the above-referenced project. In order to receive comments from all agencies, an additional fifteen days is requested for completion of the state's consistency review in accordance with 15 CFR 930.41(b). We will make every effort to conclude the review and forward the consistency determination to you on or before April 3, 1998.

Thank you for your understanding. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Ms. Cherie Trainor, Clearinghouse Coordinator, at (904) 922-5438.

Sincerely,

Ralph Cantral, Executive Director  
Florida Coastal Management Program

RC/cc

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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Regional Office  
9721 Executive Center Drive North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33702

February 27, 1998

U. S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Chief, Planning Division  
P.O. Box 4970  
Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019

Dear Mr. Hall:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed your staff's letter, dated January 29, 1998, regarding a proposal by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE) and Tampa Port Authority to deepen and widen the Alafia River Navigation Channel. Also under consideration is an expansion of the existing turning basin or construction of a new turning outside the mouth of the river. The project is located at the existing port facilities at the mouth of the Alafia River in Tampa Bay, Hillsborough County, Florida.

On February 11, 1998, the COE provided a project update during the meeting of the Natural Resources Subcommittee of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council's Agency on Bay Management (ABM). The COE and U.S. Fish and Wildlife are preparing a scope of work for a revised Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report on the options now under consideration for this project. The NMFS recommends that sediment quality in the proposed impact areas be addressed as the potential for contaminated sediments occurring in the project area does exist. Additionally, we recommend that various beneficial use alternatives be investigated for the potential dredged material including reenforcement of the shoreline along the gypsum stack north of the project area. Other beneficial alternatives could include the creation of elevations suitable for the establishment of salt marsh around disposal islands 2-D and 3-D as well as the Alafia Banks. However, in that regard, we recommend that shallow bay bottom, that may be suitable for seagrass recruitment, not be compromised for creation of emergent habitats. Various man-made borrow areas and abandoned mine pits also occur throughout the area which could utilize dredged material for the establishment of native habitats.

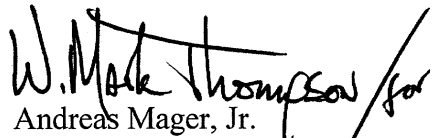
During the COE's presentation to ABM, the results of a navigation model previously conducted were summarized. That model provided information regarding the minimum width necessary for the proposed channel navigation improvements. However, it was not apparent that this model went to the extent of investigating the effects of the two turning basin options. While concern has been raised regarding turning large vessels in an expanded turning basin at the mouth of the river, it does not appear that the actual safety issues have been adequately investigated. We recommend that additional modeling occur, as necessary, to assess the viability of utilizing the existing turning basin, if expanded as proposed.



At this time, until the results of further investigations are available, the NMFS believes that creating a new turning basin outside the mouth of the Alafia River would result in the irreplaceable loss of shallow bay bottom habitat that currently supports, or may support as Tampa Bay water quality continues to improve, valuable seagrass habitat. While expansion of the existing turning basin would likely result in the loss of salt marsh and mangroves, impacts to these habitats can generally be compensated with a high degree of certainty whereas impacts to seagrasses cannot.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide you with our comments. Please direct related comments, questions or correspondence to Mr. David N. Dale of our Panama City Office staff in St. Petersburg, Florida. He may be contacted at 813/570-5317 or at the letterhead address above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Mark Thompson" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andreas Mager, Jr.  
Assistant Regional Administrator  
Habitat Conservation Division

cc:

EPA-Atlanta  
FWS-Jacksonville & Tampa  
DEP-Tallahassee  
FGFWFC-Tallahassee  
F/SER4  
F/SER43-St. Pete